



In tribute to Miss Barton, her Dansville neighbors organized, August 22, 1881, the "Dansville Society of the Red Cross," which now bears her name and is designated as Chapter No. 1.



AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS

CLARA BARTON CHAPTER NO. 1

57 ELIZABETH STREET

DANSVILLE, N.Y.

(TELEPHONE: DANSVILLE 220)

CHAPTER AREA
(Townships)
NORTH DANSVILLE
WAYLAND
SPRINGWATER
SPARTA
OSSIAN
WEST SPARTA
GROVELAND
SONYEA UNIT

January 10, 1963

Rev. Ralph W. Sockman, D.D.
Director
The Hall of Fame for Great Americans
830 Park Avenue
New York 21, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Sockman:

At their latest quarterly meeting (December 13, 1962), the Board of Directors of Clara Barton Chapter No. 1, American National Red Cross, voted to present the name of Clara Barton for consideration by the Electoral College of the Hall of Fame for Great Americans.

Understanding that the next election will be in 1965, we request that you file this nomination, to be voted on at that time.

It seems almost superfluous to list Miss Barton's qualifications for such recognition. In her own time she was regarded not only as a great American but as a world personality whose encompassing love of humanity was limited by no national boundaries.

In these current years of the Civil War Centennial, it is timely to recall that in that conflict, and throughout the postwar period, she was hailed as the "Angel of the Battlefield." Indeed, the recent biography by Ishbel Ross carries that title. To date, two memorials to her services in the early part of the war have been erected--one at Fairfax Station, Va., near the site of the Second Battle of Bull Run (Manassas), the other on the battlefield of Antietam (Sharpsburg) in Maryland. They were provided, respectively, by the Fairfax County (Va.) and Washington County (Md.) Chapters of the American Red Cross. In Richmond, at the Virginia Civil War Centennial Center, an exhibit concerned with Clara Barton's services on the state's battlefields has been placed by the Henrico County and Richmond Chapters.

In the years immediately after the war, Miss Barton engaged in two important projects. One, authorized by President Lincoln just before his assassination, was a search for missing Union soldiers, especially prisoners of war. She knew, from experience, that this was urgently necessary. The other task was the identification and proper marking of 12,900 graves of men who had died in the Confederate prison stockade at Andersonville, Ga.

[The Chapter House is a Memorial to Emma Hartman Noyes, a Charter Member of the Chapter. It was her home for many years. In 1949, it was presented to the American Red Cross by her sons and daughter—
Nicholas H. Noyes, Jansen Noyes, and Katherine F. Noyes.]

Impressive recognition of this latter service came in 1915 when the National Woman's Relief Corps (Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic) dedicated a monument to Clara Barton in the Andersonville Prison Park, by permission of the War Department. We are informed that in 1964-65 the Georgia Civil War Centennial Commission plans to focus attention on the Andersonville episode.

Doubtless Miss Barton is best known as the founder of the American Red Cross. Yet at the time of the Civil War, she had never heard of the Red Cross. She learned about it in 1870 when she was in Switzerland for her health. Leaders of the International Committee asked her why the United States had never acceded to the Geneva Convention, on which the Red Cross was based. She was unable to reply. Soon afterward, urged to engage actively in relief and rehabilitation work at the front in the Franco-Prussian War, she became an enthusiastic advocate of the Red Cross and promised that on returning home she would do all she could to promote the Geneva Convention.

Years of effort, discouragement, and frustration followed. At last, on May 21, 1881, the way opened for Clara Barton to organize the American Association of the Red Cross in Washington. However, success was not complete until March, 1882, when the Convention was signed by President Arthur and ratified by the Senate.

Besides organizing the central Red Cross society in 1881, Miss Barton later in that year aided three New York State communities to establish local societies. The first was in Dansville, whither Miss Barton had gone for her health in 1876, after returning from Europe, and where she maintained a home until 1886. (When the American Red Cross was reorganized, this society became a chapter, now known as Clara Barton Chapter No. 1.) The second and third societies in the state were organized shortly afterward in Rochester and Syracuse. All three engaged in relief for sufferers from disastrous forest fires in Michigan in the fall of 1881. Other local societies, in other states, followed.

The peacetime function of the Red Cross in disasters was, in its practical application, distinctly American. It was Miss Barton who realized that, to gain popular support, the organization would have to expand beyond wartime service--at a time when it was supposed that the United States would never be involved in another war. As incorporated in general Red Cross policy, at a later date, the provision for such peacetime service became known as the American Amendment.

During the twenty-three years that Miss Barton served as president of the American Red Cross, she personally supervised relief work in many disasters--and not only emergency relief but the rehabilitation of victims on which she insisted and which has become an established feature of Red Cross disaster operations.

In 1895, public sentiment in America was aroused by reports of massacres perpetrated by the Turks in Armenia. Certain humanitarian leaders in the United States wanted the American Red Cross to act as agent in disbursing funds for the benefit of the Armenians who had escaped with their lives but were suffering. Just when the way seemed clear, and Miss Barton was about to sail with a team, indirect word was received that the Red Cross would not be welcomed by the Turkish government. However, the Americans did not turn back. At Constantinople,

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Miss Barton's diplomatic skill and frank assurances of good will broke down barriers. Later the efficient work of men in the field, led by Dr. J. B. Hubbell, won high praise from the Turks.

In the Spanish-American War, Miss Barton's Red Cross service in Cuba earned the thanks of President McKinley and of Congress.

Clara Barton resigned as president of the American National Red Cross in 1904. She died in 1912 at the age of ninety.

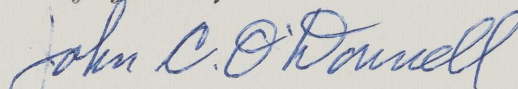
Biographies, and histories of the organization she founded, give details of a career which here is merely sketched in broad outline.

The many decorations which Clara Barton received from foreign governments--now preserved in the Library of Congress--are eloquent testimony to the esteem in which she was held abroad. Her high place in the annals of the International Red Cross received recognition at the 50th Anniversary dinner of the American Red Cross in 1931, in an address by the president of the International Committee, Judge Max Huber of Switzerland.

Clara Barton Chapter submits that Americans, in electing this truly great woman to the Hall of Fame, would be honoring themselves and paying a tribute to all that America stands for.

On the attached sheets are excerpts from "Newspaper Tributes to Clara Barton" as reprinted in Angel of the Battlefield, by Ishbel Ross; also a few significant comments by distinguished individuals.

Sincerely yours,



(Rev. Fr.) John C. O'Donnell

cc: Manager, Eastern Area
American Red Cross
Exec. Sec'y, Clara
Barton Chapter

NEWSPAPER TRIBUTES TO CLARA BARTON

New York Times, September 10, 1931:

Clara Barton died nearly twenty years ago--two years before the World War came--but she is among America's immortals. She owes that immortality to the enduring institution which she founded fifty years ago. It is hardly conceivable that the American Red Cross will not live as long as the Republic. It is essential in the life of a people enjoying individual liberty.... Thanks to her zeal and the ever-widening horizon which the guidance of other leaders and the service of hundreds of thousands in all parts of the world have been given the Red Cross, America now takes the lead in this movement of mercy.

New York Sun, April 13, 1912:

General Scott called Kearny the bravest man he ever knew; certainly Miss Barton was one of the bravest of women, and she deserved the laurel no less than the famous soldiers of the Civil War. But Clara Barton was more than brave. She devoted her life to humanity. She was one of the most useful of women, self-sacrificing to a degree, generous to a fault. Health and fortune she devoted to her great cause; ... Into the span of what other life have more mercy, tenderness and love entered? Is it not the finest kind of glory that when the American Red Cross is seen or mentioned the name of Clara Barton comes to mind like a benediction?

New York Post, April 13, 1912:

Surely, in all fields relating to the humanitarian side of life, the nineteenth century produced no finer figures than Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton.

New York Globe, April 13, 1912:

More justly than the man who first made the remark, Clara Barton could have said: "The world is my country, and to do good my religion." Her religion ran to the whole of mankind. She was a true cosmopolite, although in visible aspect seemingly a New England provincial. She not only preached but practiced the new internationalism. She represented the spirit that knows not race, nor color, nor country, nor creed, nor sex, nor any other thing when the cry of human need is heard.... Give the world enough Clara Bartons and the brotherhood of man will be ushered in.

Brooklyn Standard-Union, April 13, 1912:

The whole world today, to its remotest corner, is paying reverence to Clara Barton.... When men went forth with banners to kill, Clara Barton followed to undo their work under the Cross.... Doubtless, she must be classed as a genius, for genius is the intuitive capacity for overcoming insuperable difficulties.

Boston Transcript, April 12, 1912:

In all wars and in all battlefields, wherever the Red Cross may carry comfort and healing, it will also carry the name of Clara Barton. Nor are wars to be the ultimate limit. Wherever calamity, plague, famine, flood or fire are combatted there also will be felt the influence of this woman's immortal work.... All the great disasters of the last twenty-five years are milestones in the life of this noble woman....

Worcester Gazette, April 13, 1912:

The sign of the cross, in crimson red, had come nearer its true significance under her direction than it ever did before, whether by Constantine named or borne by Crusader bands in assaults upon the Crescent. Thus far in the world's history, no other has come so near the Christ spirit in the union of all kindreds, tongues and people in one universal bond of brotherhood as this mild-mannered, softly-spoken woman.

Richmond Journal, April 17, 1912:

.... Clara Barton was a woman of large vision and great heart. She answered the call of the world for service in its broadest, truest sense and when the infirmities of age were upon her, and her ability to serve was restricted, she sent this message, which needs no comment and no interpretation, to her soldiers. It says:

"When you were weak and I was strong, I toiled for you.

"Now you are strong, and I am weak. Because of my work for you, I ask your aid. I ask the ballot for myself and my sex. As I stood by you, pray you stand by me and mine."

Detroit Free Press, April 15, 1912:

She was perhaps the most perfect incarnation of mercy the modern world has known. She became the founder of the most significant and widespread philanthropic movement of the age, a movement that already has become an intrinsic part of world civilization.

Albany Knickerbocker-Press, April 14, 1912:

No nobler service than hers is recorded in history.

COMMENTS BY DISTINGUISHED INDIVIDUALS

U.S. Senator Charles Sumner:

Clara Barton has the brain of a statesman, the command of a general, and the heart and hand of a woman.

U.S. Senator George F. Hoar:

Clara Barton is the greatest "man" in America. Where will you find a man to equal her?

President Herbert Hoover (at the 50th Anniversary dinner of the American Red Cross, in 1931):

Clara Barton was in her own person and her own life all that the Red Cross has since become.

Judge Max Huber, President, International Committee of the Red Cross (at the 50th Anniversary dinner of the American Red Cross, in 1931):

The letters she wrote to the International Committee give full evidence of the sacred zeal and the indomitable energy of this remarkable woman.